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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 25 JUNE 25, 2007

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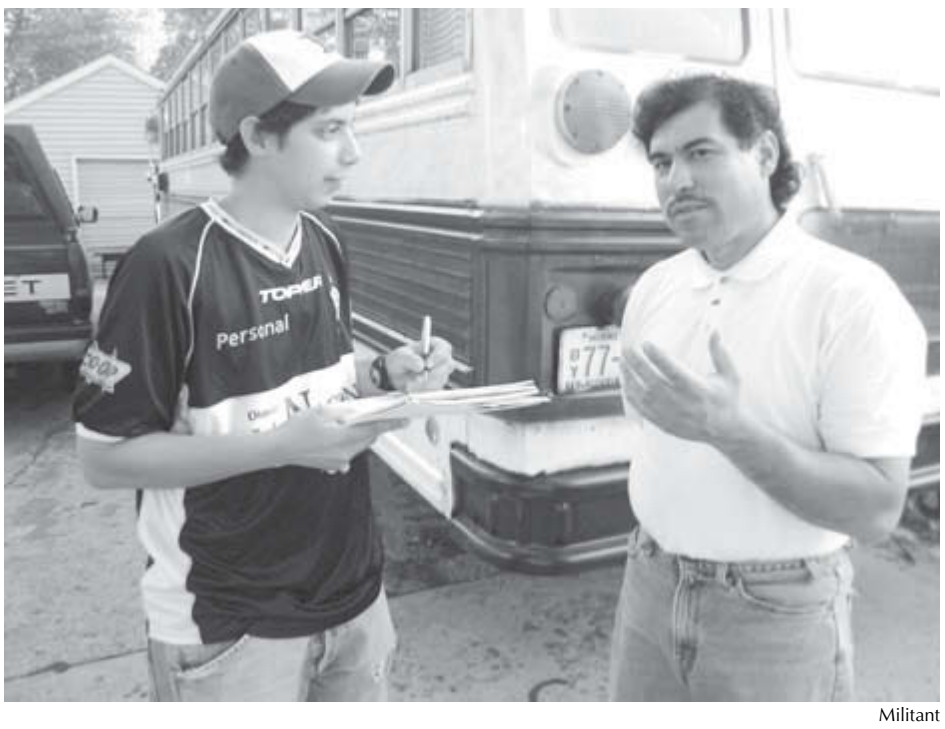

Militant

Christobal Mayorga (right), a leader of union organization drive at PM Beef slaughterhouse, in Windom, Minnesota, speaks June 10 with *Militant* reporter Julian Santana.

BY FRANK FORRESTAL AND JULIAN SANTANA

WINDOM, Minnesota, June 10—Meat packers from a cattle slaughterhouse in this rural town scored a union victory May 25 when they voted 231–193 to be represented by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1161. The night of the vote workers packed a local church to celebrate.

"When workers come together, things can change," Christobal Mayorga told the *Militant*. Mayorga has worked at PM Beef Holdings for five years and has been getting union stickers out on the job. "Before they saw us as unimportant. The bosses will eat the unorganized worker alive, but when we are organized our voice acquires a strength that can break stones," he said.

Although the press did not cover the election, word of the outcome spread quickly and spirits remain high in the

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Turkish forces shell villages in Iraqi Kurdistan

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, June 12—Turkish military forces bombarded several Kurdish villages in northern Iraq near the Turkish-Iraqi border yesterday. Ankara said the operation is aimed at the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a Kurdish group that has been fighting for decades for sovereignty in southern Turkey.

U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice warned the Turkish government against any "robust" military action across the border, indicating Washington's concern that Ankara's attacks could subvert U.S. efforts to establish a stable client regime in Baghdad. Kurds in Iraq have been Washington's strongest ally in the country. The region they largely inhabit, known as Iraqi Kurdistan, is the most stable part of a country ravaged by communal killings, in a war that has raged since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003 and subsequent occupation by imperialist forces.

Jabbar Yawar, a spokesman for Kurdish security forces, told Agence France-Presse that several villages were bombarded. "The shelling lasted for 45 minutes and was aimed at villages in

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Thousands expected in Atlanta for U.S. Social Forum

BY ELLIE GARCÍA

ATLANTA, June 13—Momentum is building for the U.S. Social Forum, scheduled to open here June 27 and end July 1. Organizers expect some 10,000 people to attend the five-day gathering, which will take place under the slogan, "Another world is possible; another U.S. is necessary."

More than 950 workshops are scheduled, including "The Fight to End Illiteracy," "Legacy of Torture: the War Against the Black Liberation Movement," "Decolonization/Self-Determination for Puerto Rico," "So You Want to Stop a War?" and "Food Sovereignty: Building Sustainable Futures for Farmers Globally."

The workshops, sponsored by groups ranging from the American Friends Service Committee to the National Hip Hop Political Convention to Students for a Democratic Society, will be held throughout the city as well as at the Atlanta Civic Center.

The World Social Forum, which began as an international gathering of "anti-globalization" forces in 2001

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1,500 rally in Connecticut to protest immigration raid

BY WILLIE COTTON

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut, June 9—About 1,500 people rallied June 7 outside St. Rose of Lima Church here to protest the arrests of 32 workers the previous day by federal immigration cops.

St. Rose of Lima, JUNTA for Progressive Action, and Unidad Latina en Accion, called the mobilization early that morning.

Norma, whose cousins and husband were grabbed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, addressed the crowd, reported the *New Haven Register*. "I feel this pain deep, deep, deep in my heart," she said. "I appreciate your support and help for all of us to get through this."

The mass and rally were the first of several events planned by immigrant rights supporters here in solidarity with those arrested. Another action has been called for Saturday, June 16.

ICE agents began the raids early Wednesday morning, lasting into late afternoon, according to residents here. The people arrested are mostly construction and restaurant workers from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Guinea, and Ecuador.

Residents of one raided home were woken up by loud knocks on the door as agents surrounded the house, the *New Haven Register* reported. The cops ordered everyone, including four children, into the living room. "We asked what was

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'La migra' grabs 7 in New Jersey

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

MORRISTOWN, New Jersey, June 10—Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents raided several apartments here and hauled off seven immigrants four days ago.

"At 6:00 a.m., three agents pushed open the door of my apartment," said Pilar Velásquez. "They took my 18-year-old son and handcuffed him. He was in his underwear getting ready for school. They put a gun on my chest."

ICE officials said they have been conducting a yearlong investigation into gang activity here in collaboration with the Morris County prosecutor's office and the Morristown Police Department. Four of the arrested workers are being charged with possession and intent to distribute drugs. The raids were part of the ICE's Opera

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Immigration bill stalled in Senate

BY RÓGER CALERO

June 11—An immigration "reform" bill has stalled in the U.S. Senate, leaving its future uncertain. Senate majority leader Harry Reid, a Democrat from Nevada, pulled it from the floor June 7 after a motion to cut off debate and move to a final vote failed.

Attempting to score a factional point, Reid tried to blame U.S. president George Bush, saying Bush did not do enough to pressure Republican senators to limit the debate and speed the measure toward a vote. "Where are the president's men? Where are the president's people helping up with these votes?" Reid said. "The headlines are going to be, 'The President Fails Again.'"

Sixty votes were needed to end the debate on a long list of amendments introduced by both Democratic and Republican lawmakers. The vote was 45–50 against ending debate on the bill. Thirty-seven Democrats, seven Republicans, and independent Senator Joseph Lieberman voted to end the debate. Thirty-eight Republicans, 11 Democrats, and independent Senator Bernard Sanders voted against it.

Since its announcement on May 17,

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Socialist workers build party convention

BY PAUL PEDERSON

June 13—Socialist Workers Party members and supporters, and Young Socialists, are building the party's 45th constitutional convention. The gathering will take place July 5–7 at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio.

There delegates will discuss and vote on reports and a political platform, which is being discussed by party branches in preparation for the convention.

The platform includes a report by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes, titled "Organizing the Communist Movement to Meet Our Openings in Mass Work." It was adopted by the party's National Committee last September.

"The massive proletarian street actions and one-day nationwide strike for the legalization of immigrant workers last spring registered a new strengthening of the working class and working-class vanguard, one that is irreversible short of major defeats in the class struggle," says

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N.Y. jury: Cop 'responsible' for killing African American

BY SALM KOLIS

NEW YORK, June 10—"This proves that you can fight the system," Juanita Young told the *Militant* today. She was referring to the verdict handed down three days earlier in a Bronx civil court that found Louis Rivera, the cop who killed her son, Malcolm Ferguson, "100 percent responsible" for the March 2000 fatal shooting.

The jury awarded Young $10.45 million for the wrongful death of her son.

Ferguson, a 23-year-old African American, was shot in the left temple, at point blank range, just blocks from the vestibule where Amadou Diallo, an African immigrant, was killed by cops in 1999 in a hail of 41 bullets. A week before his murder, Ferguson had been arrested and charged with resisting arrest while participating in a protest of the acquittals of the four cops who killed Diallo.

During his testimony at the trial, Rivera admitted he knew Ferguson was unarmed. Rivera remains an active duty cop, working a desk job, and no longer carries a gun.

"I'm happy to prove my son's innocence. Now I want the district attorney to bring criminal charges against Rivera," said Young. "It was the people, the protests, that brought this case to trial. I received very little support from politicians."

Demonstrations demanding justice for Ferguson were part of mobilizations of thousands in the spring of 2000 condemning police brutality. Throughout this period, then-mayor Rudolph Giuliani consistently defended the cops, vilified the victims, and refused to prosecute any of the police officers involved.

Messages of support flooded in from around the country, reported Young. Supporters who came to attend the trial included Margarita and Tony Rosario, whose son Anthony and nephew Hilton Vega were killed in 1995 by cops in the Bronx; Nicholas Hayward Sr., whose 13-year-old son, Nicholas Hayward Jr., was killed in 1994 by housing police in Brooklyn; and Lynne Stewart, a New York attorney currently appealing her 2005 frame-up conviction on charges of "conspiracy to provide material support to terrorist activity."

During the trial, the press emphasized Ferguson's arrest record and allegations that he was carrying heroin at the time he was killed. The city Law Department announced plans to appeal the verdict.

"As long as police brutality continues, I will be out there protesting and trying to stop killer cops from hiding behind their badges," said Young, who has consistently spoken out against police brutality and has participated in and spoken at many demonstrations on this question. "This case was never about the money. I wanted this cop exposed as a murderer."

Solidarity tour held in Los Angeles for Massachusetts workers arrested by 'la migra'

Militant/Arlene Rubinstein

Anibal Lucas (left) and René Moreno (right) of Maya K'iche speaking at Los Angeles meeting organized by Committee of Workers in Resistance.

LOS ANGELES, June 4—The Committee of Workers in Resistance just concluded a tour here of Anibal Lucas and René Moreno of Maya K'iche, a community group that has been helping organize solidarity with the 361 workers arrested in March in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid at the Michael Bianco leather plant in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

At a June 2 public meeting at the Echo Park Methodist Church, Moreno said, "We removed the veil that covers the abuses, physical and emotional, that occur with these raids." In the discussion, a Honduran worker, Romualdo Ajwitz, stressed the need to respond to the police attacks on immigrants. "I was shot in the back by the police at the May 1 demonstration," he said, referring to the police riot here, in which cops fired rubber bullets on protesters. "We cannot allow these injustices to take place." The tour included speaking engagements at several churches, a Service Employees International Union local, and cultural centers.

—MICHAEL ORTEGA

'La migra' grabs seven in Morristown, New Jersey

Continued from front page

tion Community Shield. According to Kyle Hutchins, special agent in charge of ICE's office of investigations in Newark, New Jersey, the operation is about "criminally prosecuting and removing gang members from the United States."

A number of workers interviewed by the *Militant* saw it differently.

"They had pictures of those they were looking for," said Velásquez, a house cleaner, who took part along with her entire family in the May Day rally here for legalization of undocumented immigrants. But none of her family members were in any of the photos, she said out.

Juan Gómez, who works in a car body shop, said ICE agents came to his apartment building at 7:30 a.m. banging on doors with a list of people they were looking for. "This time they were only looking for a certain type of person with problems with the law, but maybe later they'll use this to go after everyone without papers," he said.

The raids came on the heels of a June 5 announcement by Morristown mayor Donald Cresitello that federal immigration officials have approved the city's application to deputize local police as immigration cops. If the ICE office in Washington gives its seal of approval, Morristown police would have the power to begin deportation proceedings against immigrant workers. "I'm optimistic we'll be accepted into the program," Cresitello said. It will "give another tool to the Morristown police department to fight crime," he added.

"What ICE did is a violation of civil and human rights of people," said Diana Mejía, a founder of Wind of the Spirit, an immigrant rights resource center here.

"The only mistake we made was not having papers," said Velásquez. "We are not criminals."

'Militant' summer schedule

The *Militant* will continue publishing weekly through the end of June. A special issue coming off the press on Tuesday, July 3, will feature coverage on the outcome of the U.S. Social Forum (see front-page article and editorial). For the remainder of the summer, the paper will publish biweekly. We will resume weekly publication with the issue coming off the press August 30.

THE MILITANT

'It's where you can read the truth'

"I like to read the 'Militant' and I invite others to do the same. It's very different than other newspapers. In the 'Militant' you will read things you don't find in other papers. In the 'Militant,' you can read the truth."

—Francisco Sanchez
Washington, D.C.

Francisco Sanchez is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 400.

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The Militant

Vol. 71/No. 25

Closing news date: June 13, 2007

Editor and circulation director: Argiris Malapanis

Washington correspondent: Sam Manuel

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Martín Koppel, Olympia Newton, Ben O'Shaughnessy, Paul Pederson, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams, and Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January and two weeks in June.

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.
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E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: for one-year send $35 to above address.

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United Kingdom: £25 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane), London, E2 6DG, England.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Turkish troops shell Kurdish towns in Iraq

Continued from front page

the Zakho and Amadiyah regions of Dohuk," he said.

The Iraqi government lodged an official complaint with Ankara. "The foreign ministry delivered a letter to the chargé d'affaires of Turkey protesting the bombardment of Iraq around Dohuk and Arbil, which caused huge damage, fire, and spread panic among the people," a ministry statement said.

Ankara accuses Iraqi Kurdistan's regional government of providing safe haven and weapons to the PKK. The Turkish rulers also fear that an autonomous Kurdistan on their border encourages national aspirations among millions of Kurds in Turkey.

On June 7 Iraqi Kurdistan's regional president, Massoud Barzani, and Iraq's president, Jalal Talabani, rejected Ankara's demand to take action against the PKK camps. Barzani and Talabani head the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) respectively, Iraq's main Kurdish parties.

The Turkish government has ignored a PKK offer to halt hostilities if its forces stop attacking PKK camps. Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, told AP that the Turkish military should focus on fighting the PKK within Turkish territory. Turkey's army chief has said an incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan is necessary, indicating divisions among Turkey's rulers, who are under pressure from Washington.

Rice's warning that it's "not good for anybody for a robust move across the border" suggested that Washington would not oppose limited actions against the PKK. In an attempt to stem the flow of PKK forces, Ankara already has 1,500 troops several miles inside northern Iraq along a 240-mile border

Turkey's rulers are also hostile to efforts by Iraqi Kurds to incorporate the oil-rich city of Kirkuk into its autonomous region. Ankara has appealed to Washington and Baghdad to call off a referendum on the issue, scheduled for the end of this year. Barzani and Talabani have said Kurds will not accept a cancellation.

According to AP, Iranian government forces have clashed with Iranian Kurdish fighters who have bases in a remote, mountainous area of Iraqi Kurdistan. Iranian forces reportedly participated in a June 8 overnight shelling of Iraqi Kurdish villages. The PUK said artillery shells hit some areas in the Sidikan area of Erbil province—where the borders of Iraq, Iran, and Turkey converge—and that nine villages were affected.

Meanwhile, in southern Iraq the General Union of Oil Employees in Basra said striking workers had agreed to return to work and resolve outstanding issues through talks. The announcement came after Baghdad agreed to set up a committee to address workers' demands for better pay and working conditions. Shipments of oil and gas supplies were cut off to Baghdad and cities in southern Iraq when 600 workers struck June 4.

D.C. action: 'End occupation of Palestine'

Militant/ Ben Joyce

WASHINGTON, June 10—About 1,500 people marched and rallied here today to demand an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. It was part of a global Day of Action, dubbed "The World Says No to Israeli Occupation," to mark the 40th anniversary of Tel Aviv's annexation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights. Protesters called for an end to U.S. military, economic, and political support for Tel Aviv's control of the occupied territories. The action was organized by the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and United for Peace and Justice. Similar mobilizations were planned in 22 other countries around the world.

—TIM MAILHOT

Thousands expected at U.S. Social Forum

Continued from front page

in Porto Alegre, Brazil, took place most recently in Nairobi, Kenya, last January. In 2006 the World Social Forum was held in Caracas, Venezuela; Bamako, Mali; and Karachi, Pakistan. While smaller regional forums have taken place in the United States over the last several years, this year's event will be the first organized on a national scale in this country.

Forum organizers hosted a June 10 meet and greet event in Atlanta's West End, a historic Black community, to orient people to build the Forum. The West End is one of 15 local communities targeted for publicizing the Forum and where major events will be held.

Jerome Scott of Project South led the meeting. The reason, he said, to host the U.S. Social Forum in the Southeast and Atlanta is the role of the Black struggle in society and the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina on working people, especially African Americans.

Those present at the meet and greet included a dozen students and youth, some of whom have come in from around the country to build the Forum. Four have come from Oberlin College in Ohio; one from Brooklyn, New York; and three from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Buses for the event are coming from Alabama, Florida, Iowa, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Texas, Wisconsin, and elsewhere. A bus caravan from the Southwest plans to stop in New Orleans in solidarity with working people still confronting the effects of Hurricane Katrina. A map on the Forum's web site indicates attendance from nearly every single state in the country, including Alaska and Hawaii. Organizations from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America have registered, as well.

The forum will open with a march on June 27. Plenary sessions will cover "Gulf Coast Reconstruction in the Post-Katrina Era"; "War, Militarism and the Prison Industrial Complex"; "Indigenous Voices: From the Heart of Mother Earth"; "Immigrant and Migrant Rights in a Global Society"; "Liberating Gender and Sexuality: Integrating Gender and Sexual Justice Across Our Movements"; and "Workers' Rights in the Global Economy."

For more information, to register, and to get involved in efforts in your local area to build the event, visit www.ussf2007.org/.

Socialist Workers Party convention

Continued from front page

the report, referring to the massive May 1, 2006, strike that drew over 2 million workers.

"Our focus must be on the explosive potential of proletarian actions in defense of the working class," it continues. "We aim to be part of this process, helping to involve more and broader segments of our class, on the job and off, through our unions, and in other ways."

Delegates will discuss these conclusions in light of further experience, including this year's May Day actions, which drew more than 400,000 workers nationwide demanding legalization of the undocumented. The SWP National Committee report explains that the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States represent something new both for the bosses and for the working-class movement in this country. These workers "have become a permanent part of the hereditary proletariat of the United States, while often remaining a part of the hereditary proletariat of their country of origin as well," it says.

The capitalist class depends on this pool of superexploited labor, the party's platform notes. The bosses can't disentangle their need to compete and maximize profits from this expanding source of labor power. At the same time, this change poses growing problems for the U.S. rulers, especially as a mass political vanguard develops among these workers, with all its unevenness, resisting the bosses' offensive. The capitalist class can't do without these workers, and it can't do with them.

Convention sessions will be surrounded by classes, movie showings, and recreational activities. Classes will include discussions on "The Second American Revolution: Marx and Engels on the U.S. Civil War"; Ernesto Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution—this October marks the 40th anniversary of the revolutionary leader's murder in Bolivia by that country's military working with the CIA; and on Thomas Sankara and the Burkina Faso revolution. Sankara, one of the foremost revolutionary leaders in Africa, led a democratic revolution in that West African country, a former French colony called Upper Volta. November marks the 20th anniversary of his assassination.

On the way to the convention, party members are involved in a range of activities. These include working-class struggles such as the fights against immigration raids and deportations, struggles against cop brutality, and work in defense of the Cuban Revolution, including activities demanding freedom for the Cuban Five (see Young Socialists column on page 4).

In the week before the convention, SWP members and Young Socialists from the South and across the country will participate in the U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta (see front-page article and editorial on page 9). Their work there will mark the convention.

Those interested in attending the convention can contact the nearest SWP branch.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ALABAMA
Birmingham

***¡Salud!* Cuba and the Battle for the Right to Health.** Fri., June 22. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *3029A Bessemer Rd. Tel.: (205) 780-0021.*

NEW YORK
Manhattan

Fight Police Brutality! Speakers: Juanita Young, longtime fighter against police brutality and mother of Malcolm Ferguson who was killed by N.Y. cops; representative, Socialist Workers Party; others to be announced. Fri., June 22. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. *307 W. 36th St. 10th floor (use north elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.*

WASHINGTON
Seattle

No U.S. Intervention in the Philippines: Report Back from 23rd International Solidarity Affair. Speakers: Chel Cendana, BAYAN-USA, Pacific Northwest Regional Council; Rob McCauley, U.S. Committee on Labor and Human Rights in the Philippines; representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 22. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. *5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.*

CANADA
Toronto

Support the Native Fight for Land, Build the June 29 National Day of Action. Speakers: Lindsay Bonberry, spokesperson for Six Nations reclamation site in Caledonia; Michel Dugré, Communist League. Fri., June 22, 7:30 p.m. *2238 Dundas St. West, Suite 201. Tel.: (416) 535-9140.*

Students at Minnesota event learn about the Cuban Five

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

BY TOM BAUMANN

MINNEAPOLIS, June 6—More than 40 people attended a panel discussion at the University of Minnesota (U of M) here today, sponsored by the Minnesota Cuba Committee and entitled "Free the Cuban Five."

The panel included U of M students Missy Racho and Galnaz Vayghan, currently enrolled in a course "The Cuban Revolution Through the Words of Cuban Revolutionaries," and Muhammad Kareem of the Young Socialists.

The Cuban Five—Fernando González, René González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, and Ramón Labañino—are revolutionaries who have been held in U.S. prisons since 1998. They were framed up on charges that include "conspiracy to commit espionage," and were convicted in U.S. federal court in Miami in 2001. They are serving sentences ranging from 15 years to a double life term in prisons across the United States.

The meeting opened with a CNN presentation on the case of the Five and a *Nightline* report on Luis Posada Carriles, an ultrarightist born in Cuba who later became a Venezuelan citizen and who has a history of carrying out violent attacks against Cuba with Washington's support. He currently walks free in the United States, despite repeated calls for his extradition to Venezuela where he is wanted for the bombing of a Cubana airlines flight in 1976 that killed all 73 people aboard.

Citing research on declassified U.S. government documents, Racho gave a presentation on the history of U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionary activity against Cuba, including violent attacks carried out by ultrarightist organizations operating from U.S. soil with Washington's complicity.

Vayghan centered her presentation on the unfair trial the Cuban Five got in Miami. She noted the arbitrary methods the prosecution used against them.

Kareem pointed to the *First and Second Declarations of Havana*, a book recently released by Pathfinder Press that contains two manifestos adopted by the Cuban people in the early 1960s during mobilizations to defend the revolution. Kareem said the U.S. rulers keep the Five behind bars because they are a good example of the people forged by the Cuban Revolution and representative of millions of everyday Cubans. "The Cuban Revolution teaches that revolution is possible," he said, and its example can and needs to be emulated everywhere, including in the United States. "That's what the U.S. rulers fear."

Muhammad Kareem contributed to this article.

Militant/Tom Baumann

Panel discussion at the University of Minnesota to demand freedom for the Cuban Five, June 6. From right: Golnaz Vayghan, Missy Racho, students at the university; Muhammad Kareem, member of the Young Socialists; and August Nimtz, professor of political science at the university and chairperson.

Meat packers at PM Beef win union representation

Continued from front page

wake of the union victory. This is especially true of workers at Swift & Company's cut-and-kill plant in Worthington, just 30 miles away. Workers at the Swift plant, which employs about 2,300, are also members of UFCW Local 1161.

The union vote comes six months after *la migra* raided the Worthington plant, arresting 239 workers. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) rounded up nearly 1,300 workers at six Swift plants nationwide last December, half of whom had been deported as of March 1.

Most of the 500 workers at PM Beef are Latino immigrants. Many of them previously worked at Swift in Worthington.

One of the central goals of the immigration police is to strike fear among workers and intimidate them from fighting for their rights. The union vote points in the opposite direction.

Militant reporters talked to workers at PM Beef about their struggle this weekend. The majority asked that their last names not be used, or agreed to be quoted only anonymously, for fear of retaliation by the bosses or the government.

"We sought out the union because we were tired of the indignities and abuses from the supervisors," said Maria, a PM Beef worker. "We were tired of being cheated on our wages, the line speed, lack of bathroom breaks, and being charged for our knives, which cost between $25–$30 a piece."

"They charge us for almost everything," said Saul, who quit PM Beef late last year. "We had to buy our own knives. The line was so fast you couldn't keep up. I had enough of that. Now I work on a dairy farm. I'm better off with cows."

"This company treats people like slaves," said another worker at shift change. "The boss promised to give us knives every three months and slow the line down, but people did not believe him."

Francisco, who works on the cut floor, said workers start at $9 per hour. After the company says you are "qualified," you make $10. It's hard to make more than that. He said he knew of a worker who had been there four years without a raise. In addition, the company often cheated workers in their weekly paychecks. "We would be paid for 38 hours when we worked 40," he said.

In addition to being denied bathroom breaks, Maria said both the male and female bathrooms only have one stall. Health-care benefits are paltry. "No dental, no vision, and medical insurance with high premiums, like $50 per week. As a result, many go without any insurance," she said. "We are superexploited, that's the main reason we are fighting for union representation."

The organizing effort began last summer. Maria said workers from the plant held a meeting with UFCW officials at a picnic in Worthington. "After that the union began to organize house visits and many workers began to sign union cards," she said. "In February we held a big meeting at a hotel in Windom with everyone there."

In the weeks before the vote, the bosses and their hirelings, including PM Beef's vice president and a battery of company lawyers, organized an intimidation campaign. They held meetings with workers and said "things like the union is bad, wages will be lowered," said Maria. "Supervisors threatened that *la migra* will come into the plant."

"Workers withstood one-on-one meetings with bosses to maintain their solidarity and courage to vote together for UFCW," said Kevin Williamson, UFCW international vice president and Region 6 director, according to a May 29 union press release. "Their successful campaign will inspire other area meatpacking and other processing workers to stand up for respect and dignity on the job."

Some 45 percent of the ballots were against the union. A number of workers were persuaded by company supervisors who said "just give us a chance" and promised things will "get better."

Other workers said the company cheated by having some of the bosses vote in the election.

Mayorga said he is proud of what workers have accomplished. "The company sent the cops after me to ask me for my documents because I drive a bus in which I transport many of the workers from Worthington. They were surprised to see that I have a license and insurance," he said.

Francisco proudly said that every single worker on the kill floor voted for the union.

"Most of the people on knife jobs supported the union because they are the ones who are suffering the most." Mayorga added.

After the vote, the company began a petition campaign against the union. Workers say most employees have refused to sign.

PM Beef, which is based in Kansas City, and has plants in Minnesota, Iowa, and Virginia, is also in the hot seat for seven cases of *E. coli* poisoning in Minnesota this spring.

1,500 protest arrests in New Haven

Continued from front page

going on, and they kept shouting for us to shut up," said Samy, a mother of two. Everyone but the children and their mothers were taken from the house.

"Legal or illegal we are all human. They try to intimidate us," said Lydi Cortés, a resident of Fair Haven, a largely Latino neighborhood in New Haven, where most of the raids happened. "I am against the new ID card," Cortés said. "It will only give them a way to find people easier."

Two days before the raids, the New Haven Board of Aldermen voted 25–1 to create an all-purpose municipal identification card. Supporters of the program, among the first of its kind in the country, say it will help the estimated 15,000 undocumented workers in this city of 125,000 people by allowing them to open bank accounts and to give them ID to show local police when asked. Many here say approval of this program prompted the ICE raid.

ICE spokeswoman Paula Grenier denied the raids were connected to the ID program, reported the *New Haven Register*. "We don't conduct random operations," she said. "This was a planned fugitive operation specifically targeting those in violation of deportation orders." Only four of the 32 workers grabbed, however, had arrest warrants. In reference to the New Haven raids, Marc Raimondi, another ICE spokesman, told the *New York Times,* "There is truly no safe haven for fugitive aliens."

Some view the municipal ID program, along with other laws in New Haven, as being immigrant-friendly. New Haven is among a number of cities that prohibit local police from enforcing immigration violations.

People here expressed varying views on the influx of immigrant labor into the country. "There is too much immigration," José Aviles told the *Militant*. "I'm not against it, but it becomes too much. I paint houses for a living and I can't charge very much because undocumented immigrants will do it for cheaper."

"It's inhumane," said another resident, who asked to remain anonymous, referring to the raids and deportations. "We all come out of necessity to work. This affects the children most."

Many children have been left behind because of the arrests, reported the *New Haven Register*. A Nicaraguan woman, for example, was arrested in front of her 14-year-old son and held overnight in nearby Hartford.

An emergency bond hearing was set for June 13 in Hartford for 18 of the 32 workers arrested who have special needs. Supporters were planning a solidarity rally outside the federal court.

Olga Rodríguez contributed to this article.

Pathfinder books promoted at major U.S. trade show

BY JIM ROGERS

NEW YORK—Several volunteers staffed the Pathfinder Press booth at the book industry trade show, BookExpo 2007, to promote a broad range of titles on revolutionary working-class politics to independent bookstore buyers, book distributors, and librarians. The event took place June 1–3 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center here.

PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

Organizers estimated attendance at around 30,000, about 8,000 of whom were book buyers for stores or libraries.

The Pathfinder booth featured *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution; The First and Second Declarations of Havana*: *Manifestos of Revolutionary Struggle in the Americas Adopted by the Cuban People;* and issue no. 12 of the magazine *New International* with the article "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun."

Visitors took hundreds of flyers promoting these titles. More than 60 bookstore buyers and librarians from around the country signed up to be contacted by local volunteers. Several follow-up appointments are already scheduled.

There was international interest too, including from one bookstore and distributor in Trinidad and Tobago and one distributor in South Africa. Around $2,000 worth of Pathfinder books were sold or ordered at BookExpo.

Militant/Arthur Hughes

Pathfinder booth at BookExpo in New York's Jacob Javits Convention Center, June 1.

'¡Salud!' shows Cuba's health care system, internationalism

¡Salud! *2006 documentary, 93 minutes, directed by Connie Field, produced by Connie Field and Gail Reed.*

BY LEA SHERMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Filmed in South Africa, the Gambia, Honduras, Venezuela, and Cuba, this documentary depicts the huge inequalities in health care in the world. It shows the needless misery and suffering of millions from curable diseases like malaria, lack of clean water, lack of sanitation facilities, malnutrition, and other life-and-death issues.

The film shows Cuba is the example to be emulated with its universal health care system—a right for all free of charge. Doctors live and work in their communities and travel to the remotest rural parts of the island to provide health care. Despite Washington's economic war against Cuba, complex surgeries are provided for all who need them.

IN REVIEW

The film goes back and forth between the advances in medical care in Cuba and scenes of Cuban doctors aiding impoverished toilers around the world to the best of their ability with the limited resources that exist in semicolonial countries.

The documentary points out that since 1963, when its first internationalist medical team was sent to Algeria, Cuba has sent some 100,000 doctors to 101 countries to provide medical aid, including in some of the world's remotest corners.

These medical volunteers provide health services where native-born doctors—who prefer a high standard of living, and earn lots more through private practice—do not want to go. For example, in Honduras, after the 1998 hurricane, Cuban doctors provided invaluable care in areas where few doctors would go, as they do in Venezuela today.

Cuba also has set up medical and nursing schools, including the Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba, which trains students from all over the world—from Africa to the United States. After graduating, the students return home to work where they are most needed.

In the film liberal politicians and professionals from the United States praise Cuba's health care system. Former U.S. president James Carter says Cuba could compete with the U.S. medical system, pointing to the low cost of the care.

Gail Reed

Cuban doctor Maritza Prego examining a baby in the Gambia, as shown in the documentary *¡Salud!*

Representative Bennie Thompson, a Democrat from Mississippi and member of the Congressional Black Caucus, notes that of 23 counties in Mississippi, 22 are underserved. He pointed out that Cubans have a lower infant mortality rate and live longer than many of his constituents.

Harvard Medical School professor Paul Farmer makes the point that Cuba shows what underdeveloped countries can do to put in place a comprehensive health care system.

The premise of the film is that any poor country can do what Cuba has done. It is just a matter of will, of good people wanting to help, of training doctors and sending them out in the world—good people doing good things.

This message is wrong and misleading.

The documentary is beautifully filmed, has some wonderful scenes with Cuban doctors and their interactions with patients and friends, both within Cuba and in other countries. It includes footage of the ravages caused by lack of health care in Cuba before the revolution.

However, it gives the impression that you can transfer Cuba's medical techniques and practices without a thoroughgoing revolutionary change of government and society.

The reason Cuba was able to implement a universal health care system, providing medical care to all and sending internationalist medical brigades all over the world, is because Cuba made a socialist revolution.

In 1959 the workers and farmers of Cuba, under the leadership of the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro, overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. This changed everything. Backed by this revolutionary government, the Cuban toilers were able to put an end to U.S. imperialist domination and class exploitation by the native capitalists, and make advances that served the interest of the vast majority.

It is impossible for any country to emulate Cuba's sterling example in the world in health care without making a socialist revolution and forging the kind of leadership that puts the interests of humanity above everything. As the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban Revolution Ernesto Che Guevara put it, to be a revolutionary doctor you must first make a revolution.

It is this example of socialist revolution working people can emulate to be able to do what Cuba has done in health care or other fields.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS
THE Mmilitant
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

June 25, 1982

The *New York Times* did not like the June 12 peace demonstration.

After tipping its hat to the worthy ideals of the action, a June 13 *Times* editorial asserted, "Yet the very size and fervor of this movement makes it inarticulate."

Actually, it was the authoritative voice of American capitalism which was rendered nearly inarticulate by the idea of a million people marching in the streets and declaring, with fervor, their opposition to war and nuclear weapons.

What's really needed, the *Times* advises, is an "intellectual" approach. The *Times*, and those it speaks for, hated and feared June 12. They correctly saw it as the historic event it was, a giant outpouring of people determined to make their voices heard on this issue.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

June 24, 1957

The United States government is now under extremely heavy pressure to accept the proposal made by the Soviet Union for a halt to the perilous nuclear weapons tests. The breakthrough for a ban on the terms came June 14 with the proposal by the Soviet Union at the current London disarmament parley that nuclear explosions be suspended for two or three years beginning immediately, and that this period be used for negotiating a permanent ban.

The Soviet offer coincides with a powerful body of world public opinion that elementary human safety cannot permit continuance of the radioactive explosions. Washington has made it plain that it wants to avoid cessation of the nuclear tests even for a limited time.

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

June 25, 1932

The lifting of the ban on the Nazi Storm Troops has already led to a big spurt in the number of armed and bloody clashes with working men all over the German Reich. In Hamburg, in Altona, in Kiel, in Essen, in Berlin, in Frankfort, the street battles between the Hitlerites and the workers have resulted in about a dozen deaths and in scores of wounded during the last week alone.

Every day, the plans of the Von Papen government—as the government of the organization of the Fascist coup d'état—are becoming clearer.

With the tremendous growth in the number of armed conflicts, the danger of the Hitler coup becomes a matter of days.

‘A book that will be used to learn t

Presentation of ‘Our History Is Still Being Written’ at festival on 160

The following are remarks by Mary-Alice Waters at a three-day conference in Havana, Cuba, that was part of the May 30–June 2 festival marking “the 160th anniversary of the Chinese presence in Cuba” (see article in last week’s issue). She spoke about the book Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution *by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong. Waters is editor of the book and president of Pathfinder Press.*

Also participating in the June 1 event were two of the book’s three authors, generals Sío Wong and Chui.

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Militant photos by Martín Koppel

Above: Panelists at session of conference on Chinese in Cuba, held June 1 at the headquarters of the Kow Kong association in Havana’s Chinatown. The conference was part of the festival on the 160th anniversary of the Chinese presence in Cuba. From left: Gen. Gustavo Chui, Mary-Alice Waters, moderator Yanet Jiménez, Gen. Moisés Sío Wong, Maidelis Sam Milán, and Dayami Rodríguez. Waters, Sío Wong, and Chui spoke on *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. Sam Milán and Rodríguez spoke on the Chinese Cuban community in Bayamo, in eastern Cuba. Left: Part of the audience.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

On behalf of Pathfinder I want to thank the organizers of this conference—especially compañeras Carmen [Eng] and María Teresa [Montes de Oca Choy], and compañeros [Gustavo] Chui and [Moisés] Sío Wong—for the opportunity to be with you here today to talk about *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution.*

I will say a few words about two topics. First, why this book is important in lands outside of Cuba. Second, why it has generated such broad interest, thus far especially in the United States.

❖

The interviews that eventually became this book were four years in the making. None of us thought when we started that the product of our labors would be a book of well over 220 pages. But the truth is that the story became more and more interesting as we went along. We couldn't stop.

Our History Is Still Being Written begins as the story of three young people who, like thousands of others of their generation, refused to accept the brutalities and indignities of life under the Batista dictatorship. They joined the struggle against it, and finally took up arms as part of the Rebel Army to destroy it. It is the story of how they themselves were transformed, how they accomplished things they never dreamed possible, as they fought—successfully—to transform the conditions of life for all Cubans.

But the book is more than even that, much more.

Introduction to Cuban Revolution

It is an introduction to the Cuban Revolution.

We have seen how young people from all kinds of backgrounds, from countries around the world, identify with the three Cuban youth who they meet in these pages. Many can imagine themselves doing exactly the same things under similar circumstances.

Still, the book has touched a *special* chord among many Asian youth in countries like the United States, Canada, and elsewhere.

In part, this is because knowledge of their own proud histories of struggle in North America and elsewhere in the Asian diaspora has long been denied them. They are stunned to learn that between 1847 and 1875 almost the same number of Chinese arrived in Cuba as in the United States—at a time when the population of the U.S. was some 38 million, while the population of Cuba was 1.4 million. With that fact alone, they begin to understand the unusual weight and political importance in the history of Cuba’s revolutionary struggles of the Chinese who first arrived on Cuba’s shores as bonded labor.

In a popular way, the generals tell this story of Chinese immigration to Cuba, including the exemplary and singularly untarnished record of the battalions of Chinese workers who fought for independence from the Spanish colonial masters in the late 19th century. That struggle—inseparable from the battle throughout the Americas for the abolition of slavery, and the elimination of indentured servitude in all forms—was the crucible in which the Cuban nation itself was forged. As is often said here in Cuba—with pride—this is a nation that is one-third African, one-third Chinese, and one-third Spanish.

All three generals took part in Cuba’s internationalist mission in defense of Angola’s sovereignty. Each recounts his experiences in that nearly 16-year effort between 1975 and 1991 that defeated the armed forces of the South African apartheid regime. As Nelson Mandela so accurately told the people of Cuba in 1991, yours was an unparalleled contribution to the history of the peoples of Africa. The back cover of the book captures well that enduring proletarian internationalist power of the Cuban Revolution. In the words of Fidel: “A people not willing to fight for the freedom of others will never be ready to fight for their own.”

We often tell young people in the United States, “If you want to understand why the Cuban people were able to resist and surmount the crisis of the Special Period, defying all predictions to the contrary, there is no better place to start than by reading this book.” Without the century and a half of struggle it records—including the selfless aid given Angola—it would not have been possible.

Our History is also one of the best places to start to understand why five young Cuban internationalists risked their lives a decade ago to infiltrate Cuban counterrevolutionary groups in Florida in order to help defend the Cuban people against the murderous plots of these groups—and to expose the truth about them, a truth hidden from people in the United States itself. And why the U.S. government uses the draconian prison sentences imposed on those five heroes of the Cuban Revolution to try to punish the Cuban people for the audacity of making, and for nearly 50 years tenaciously defending, the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

Power of Cuba’s example today

One of the striking things about the response to *Our History* is that however much interest there is in the revolutionary struggle against the Batista tyranny, it is the descriptions of what is being done in Cuba today that readers find most powerful.

In the final section of the book, entitled “The Special Period and Beyond,” each of the three compañeros talks about his current responsibilities: In the leadership of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution. At the head of the National Institute of State Reserves. In the work to transform the infrastructure of the port of Havana, and clean up a century and a half of industrial pollution of the bay and its tributaries. In the efforts to develop a program of small-scale urban agriculture to help conquer the food crisis of the Special Period. In aid to the people of Venezuela.

Through their accounts we see Cuba’s *socialist* revolution as it is advancing *today*. To use Chui’s phrase, we see history that is still being written.

❖

Of the 400 some titles that Pathfinder Press keeps in print, more than 60 are books and pamphlets that strive to make

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All 18 books are available from distributors listed on page 8, or at...

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o fight—and win’

years of Chinese presence in Cuba

Militant/Martín Koppel

Participants in June 1 presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written* in Havana look at displays featuring photos in book and on reception it has received around the world.

the real, and often complex, history about the Cuban Revolution accessible to those of us outside Cuba who so badly need to be able to learn from the revolutionary example of the Cuban people. To learn not only how to fight, but how to *win*. Yet nothing Pathfinder has published in recent years has generated the breadth of interest that *Our History Is Still Being Written* has received.

Since September of last year alone, more than two dozen meetings to discuss this book have been held in cities, Chinese communities, and on campuses across the United States and Canada, as well as in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela. A good number of them have drawn audiences of eighty, a hundred, and more. One at the Vancouver public library in Canada topped 300. A high percentage of those attending these meetings are individuals who previously had no particular knowledge of, or interest in, the Cuban Revolution.

For us this experience has been unprecedented. Most of these meetings on each campus or in the Chinese community have been sponsored and organized by multiple student organizations, especially Asian American and Latin American student groups. And by Chinese historical societies, public libraries that serve predominately Chinese communities, and numerous university departments and study programs—Asian American Studies, Ethnic Studies, Latin American Studies, and more.

At several of them, there has been translation into Mandarin, Cantonese, or both, in addition to Spanish.

Speakers have included dozens of students, both U.S. born and recent immigrants, including Chinese young people from Hong Kong, Taiwan, the People’s Republic of China, and various countries throughout Asia who are studying in the United States. And scores of professors and others with a keen interest in the proud history of struggles against colonialism and imperialist domination of Our America.

Working people: humanity’s real globalization

What explains this surprisingly broad interest?

More than anything else, I believe, the response is a registration of something new in the class struggle in the United States. The first stirrings of a new working-class vanguard have been felt, a vanguard in which the swelling ranks of immigrant workers, many denied residency papers, are often playing a central role, as they fight for dignity on and off the job, for their lives and livelihood, demanding the immediate legalization of all immigrants. “We are workers, not criminals,” is a banner they carry with pride.

But this is not primarily a question of immigration. It is a battle for class solidarity and class consciousness, a battle that will decide the future of the working class in the United States. Standoffs and setbacks in battles with the employers will continue. But the foundation is being laid for strengthened resistance by working people and their trade unions to the brutal and intensifying capitalist offensive of the last two decades. That drive has succeeded in cutting wages in half in basic industries like meatpacking, while accelerating the speed of production to previously unheard of levels that have brought crippling injury and death to thousands.

The de facto absence of a U.S.-Mexico border, and development of an increasingly conscious and combative vanguard among millions of workers who move back and forth across it, is the biggest crisis the U.S. rulers face. Greater than Iraq or Afghanistan. They can and eventually will extricate themselves—temporarily—from any single battlefront in their so-called “global war against terrorism” and survive. But they cannot stop intensifying their profit-driven exploitation of our labor power without ceasing to exist. Yes, we are their grave diggers. And, yes, Marx was right, the capitalists keep producing us. We, the working people, are humanity’s real globalization.

This, more than anything else, is behind the interest that young Asians in the United States have in learning about their own history there. It explains their pride in discovering the centuries of struggle by their ancestors against the exploitation and oppression they overcame. Without exception, in every meeting that has taken place, at least one young person of Asian descent has spoken up to say, “I never knew there were Chinese in Cuba, or anywhere else in Latin America.”

But it is the example of Cuba *today* that is decisive. What stands out today is the *absence* of discrimination against Cubans of Chinese descent, their integration on all levels of Cuban society—in striking contrast to what Chinese face elsewhere throughout the Americas and the world. Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong are not exceptions. They are representative products of Cuba’s socialist revolution.

In the book, Sío Wong tells the story of a discussion he had several years ago with the president of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas who was attending a conference here in Cuba on the Chinese diaspora in the Americas. The president asked him, “How is it possible that you, a descendent of Chinese, occupy a high government post, are a deputy of the National Assembly, and a general of the Armed Forces?”

The answer, Sío Wong told him, was not complex. The difference is that “here a socialist revolution took place.” A revolution that eliminated discrimination based on the color of a person’s skin because it “eliminated the property relations that create not only economic but social inequality between rich and poor.” That is what has made the experience of Chinese in Cuba different from elsewhere in the Americas. That is what makes this book important.

A special request

In closing, I want to address a special petition to our Chinese compañeros who are taking part in this special event that commemorates the 160th anniversary of the arrival in Cuba of the first shiploads of indentured Chinese workers.

Our History Is Still Being Written was published simultaneously in Spanish and English. Everywhere we have presented it, however, there are always young people as well as others who ask, “When will this book be available in Chinese? Please let us know as soon as you have it so we can organize another meeting to discuss it, one in which all of us can genuinely participate on an equal footing.”

In the United States and Canada today (not to speak of other countries) there are 1 million? 2 million? who knows the exact figure? of our coworkers and co-students who will not be able to read this book until we have it in Chinese. And that number is growing daily.

When we announce that the Chinese translation is already under way, organized by the International Center for Chinese Art and Culture in Beijing, that news invariably brings a spontaneous burst of heartfelt applause. Audiences are delighted to learn of the plan to present the book in China in September of this year as part of the activities that will be held there to commemorate the 160th anniversary of the Chinese presence in Cuba.

So we hope our Chinese compañeros will carry this petition from your compatriots in the Americas with you on your return to China, and help us meet their eager requests.

For our part, it has been an honor to be able to help make this story available to those the world over who will use it as they too learn to fight like the Cubans fight—and to win.

Coal miners in Australia strike over job safety

BY BOB AIKEN

SYDNEY, Australia, June 9—Workers at the Anglo Coal’s Dawson mine near Moura, in central Queensland, went on a series of protest strikes in mid-May as part of their fight for a new contract. Health and safety questions, including extended shift rosters and mandatory “fitness” tests, are at the heart of the dispute.

These issues have been brought into sharper focus by the death on April 9 of Jason Blee at Anglo Coal’s Moranbah North mine, also in central Queensland.

With coal prices and exports booming, coal production in Australia has jumped nearly 40 percent over the past decade. The Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), the main coal mining union, has charged that imposition of longer hours, growing use of workers hired through contract companies, and the use of contract supervisors, as part of the bosses’ productivity drive, has undermined safety standards across the industry. The CFMEU estimates that about one-third of the workforce in New South Wales mines are now contractors.

Productivity in coal mining—output per worker—increased by 90 percent between 1993 and 2003. Over the same 10-year period there were 191 mining fatalities (across both coal and metals mining) in the country.

Blee, a 33-year-old contract worker, was crushed by a shuttle car—the fourth miner killed over the past year in Australia. The results of an inquiry into his death, which involves CFMEU safety officers, have yet to be reported. The Mackay *Daily Mercury* reported that several hundred people attended his funeral, April 16, including many coal miners.

There were seven potentially fatal incidents at the Moranbah North mine in the last half of 2006, according to CFMEU safety officer Steve Smyth, including a roof collapse that trapped seven miners in September. After Blee’s death, the Minister of Mines in Queensland’s Australian Labor Party state government, Geoffrey Wilson, announced that safety audits would be carried out at all coal mines in the state.

Since then CFMEU safety officer Tim Whyte has accused state government mining inspectors of failing to issue official safety warnings twice—over a safety switch fault in some shuttle cars that has been discovered during the Blee inquiry; and over a breathing apparatus failure during a smoke inhalation incident at the Oakey Creek #1 mine May 18.

Workers at the Dawson mine want to retain their current three days on, three days off shift rosters, while the company has proposed an eight days on, eight days off pattern. The company is also demanding only two half-hour breaks over a 12-hour shift. Many miners, particularly those hired by contract companies, also drive up to two to three hours each way to get to Dawson or other mines, on top of a 12-hour shift, making fatigue a serious concern for workers.

Queensland CFMEU vice president Glenn Power told the *Militant* in a June 1 phone interview that negotiations over a collective agreement at the mine had been going on since last October, and that further stoppages would be organized in June if a settlement wasn’t reached with Anglo Coal. The main sticking point, he said, was the company’s insistence on including a clause that would require workers to undergo a rigorous “fitness for duty” test carried out by company doctors, without union health and safety representatives being involved. “We see it as a termination clause,” Power said. The

Continued on page 8

Leon Trotsky on lessons of the Spanish revolution

Below is an excerpt from The Spanish Revolution (1931–39), *one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in June. The author, Leon Trotsky, was a central leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks. The book contains Trotsky's day-to-day correspondence, interviews, and political assessments of the Spanish revolution, including the roots of its unnecessary defeat. It records Trotsky's tireless collaborative effort with revolutionary forces in the country toward building a mass revolutionary party of the Spanish working class. The Popular Front "theory"—advanced by the Stalinist regime in Moscow and followed by its supporters in Spain—subordinated the interests of the workers and peasants to an alliance with liberal bourgeois forces and resulted in the crushing defeat of the Spanish revolution. Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

Young workers organized Popular Republican militias in Spain in 1936, part of the counterattack by working people against fascist forces led by Gen. Francisco Franco.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

All general staffs are studying closely the military operations in Ethiopia, in Spain, in the Far East, in preparation for the great future war. The battles of the Spanish proletariat, heat lightning flashes of the coming world revolution, should be no less attentively studied by the revolutionary staffs. Under this condition and this condition alone will the coming events not take us unawares.

Three ideologies fought—with unequal forces—in the so-called republican camp, namely, Menshevism, Bolshevism, and anarchism. As regards the bourgeois republican parties, they were without either independent ideas or independent political significance and were able to maintain themselves only by climbing on the backs of the reformists and Anarchists. Moreover, it is no exaggeration to say that the leaders of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism did everything to repudiate their doctrine and virtually reduce its significance to zero. Actually two doctrines in the so-called republican camp fought—Menshevism and Bolshevism.

According to the Socialists and Stalinists, i.e. the Mensheviks of the first and second instances, the Spanish revolution was called upon to solve only its "democratic" tasks, for which a united front with the "democratic" bourgeoisie was indispensable. From this point of view, any and all attempts of the proletariat to go beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy are not only premature but also fatal. Furthermore, on the agenda stands not the revolution but the struggle against the insurgent Franco.

Fascism, however, is not feudal but bourgeois reaction. A successful fight against bourgeois reaction can be waged only with the forces and methods of the proletarian revolution. Menshevism, itself a branch of bourgeois thought, does not have and cannot have any inkling of these facts.

The Bolshevik point of view, clearly expressed only by the young section of the Fourth International, takes the theory of permanent revolution as its starting point, namely, that even purely democratic problems, like the liquidation of semi-feudal land ownership, cannot be solved without the conquest of power by the proletariat; but this in turn places the socialist revolution on the agenda. Moreover, during the very first stages of the revolution, the Spanish workers themselves posed in practice not merely democratic problems but also purely socialist ones. The demand not to transgress the bounds of bourgeois democracy signifies in practice not a defense of the democratic revolution but a repudiation of it. Only through an overturn in agrarian relations could the peasantry, the great mass of the population, have been transformed into a powerful bulwark against fascism. But the landowners are intimately bound up with the commercial, industrial, and banking bourgeoisie, and the bourgeois intelligentsia that depends on them. The party of the proletariat was thus faced with a choice between going with the peasant masses or with the liberal bourgeoisie. There could only be one reason to include the peasantry and the liberal bourgeoisie in the same coalition at the same time: to help the bourgeoisie deceive the peasantry and thus isolate the workers. The agrarian revolution could have been accomplished only *against* the bourgeoisie, and therefore only through measures of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no third, intermediate regime. . . .

It would be naive, however, to think that the politics of the Comintern in Spain stem from a theoretical "mistake." Stalinism is not guided by Marxist theory, or for that matter by any theory at all, but by the empirical interests of the Soviet bureaucracy.

June BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS 25% DISCOUNT

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Australia coal miners strike over safety

Continued from page 7

average age of the workforce at Dawson is 49. Collective agreements between the unions and coal companies exist at almost all coal mines in Australia.

The expansion of coal production is stretching rail transport and coal loading ports to the limit—three-quarters of Australia's coal production is exported. There are currently around 150 ships waiting off Australia's east coast to load exported coal. Now, with loading quotas for the coal companies being cut by port authorities, the bosses are threatening cuts in production and layoffs at a number of mines.

Announcements have been made of 79 jobs to be cut at the Austar mine near Newcastle, and 250 at three Coal and Allied (Rio Tinto) mines in the Hunter Valley north of Newcastle. Anglo Coal is threatening to lay off 100 workers at its Bundoora mine, in central Queensland, blaming coal shipping delays.

Linda Harris contributed to this article.

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EDITORIAL

Build U.S. Social Forum

Get involved in local efforts to build and participate in the U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta, June 27–July 1. Help fill the buses to this political gathering of thousands.

The five days of workshops, plenary sessions, and related events provide ample opportunities for *Militant* readers to meet others interested in revolutionary politics. Many of the panels will dovetail themes that have been covered regularly in these pages—from the struggle for legalization of the undocumented immigrants, to the U.S.-led multi-theater "war on terrorism," to the fight for Black freedom.

Among the thousands of youth, trade unionists, and others gathered in Atlanta, many will be looking for the most effective way to fight to transform society to one not dominated by capitalism's dog-eat-dog reality and morality. Repelled by imperialist war as a long-term feature of life, by the unrelenting job speedup and wage cuts, and by the racism and brutality inherent in the capitalist system, many, especially youth, will be open to a revolutionary, working-class course of action.

Those who take their political lead from the *Militant* can provide a unique perspective on all these questions—one of building a revolutionary youth organization and a proletarian party that can lead the workers and farmers in the struggle to take political power to change the world to one based on human solidarity. Exchanging ideas and experiences with others while participating in the Forum will help draw workers, young people, and others toward the communist movement.

In addition, the Forum provides a great arena to expand the *Militant's* circulation and build up its subscription base. Supporters of the paper will be offering special discounts on books on revolutionary politics along with subscriptions at the Forum. Selling as many such books and *Militant* subscriptions as possible can help clarify issues debated at the floor, and begin to develop lasting political relationships with young people and others there who want to fight—and win.

Participate in the U.S. Social Forum. Get to know as many of those attending from your area as possible. Link up with local efforts—currently going on in cities across the country—to maximize the number of people from your area who attend the gathering. Travel on busses with them. See you there.

A special issue of the paper coming off the press July 3 will report on the outcome.

Immigration bill stalls in U.S. Senate

Continued from front page

opposition to the bill has grown among employers associations and politicians on both sides of the issues. This has been expressed in a string of amendments introduced from the Senate's floor seeking to reshape the measure. The amendments included one, which was defeated, that proposed to annul key provisions of the bill that would allow some of the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States to eventually obtain permanent residence.

Sharp opposition has also come from many bosses concerned that a "merit-based" point system to obtain residency, heavily weighted on skills and formal education levels, would hamper the flow of immigrant labor they depend on to make profits. Many of these employers also said the number of visas per year proposed in the guest worker plan was inadequate.

Early in the morning, before the bill was shelved, the Senate passed, by a 49–48 vote, a motion to place a five-year limit on a guest worker program that would allow 200,000 immigrant workers to come into the country with temporary visas every year. Leading up to that vote, both lawmakers advocating tighter limits on immigration and trade union officials opposed to the guest worker plan expressed similar arguments, saying that "a flood" of immigrant workers who are paid lower wages would erode pay and working conditions and take away jobs from "American" workers. An earlier vote had already cut the number of immigrant workers allowed every year into the United States by half, and had eliminated a provision to raise the annual number of temporary workers to 600,000 if necessary to meet labor demand.

As drafted, the bipartisan proposal would allow some undocumented immigrants to apply for a renewable Z visa after paying fines and fees of at least $4,500. After eight years, those with Z visas could apply for residency after paying an additional $4,000, show that they speak English, remain employed, and pass a background check. Applicants would then be required to leave the United States and apply from their country of origin before their applications would be considered based on the "merit" system. The legislation would also tighten border controls, adding 6,000 additional border police and building hundreds of miles of fences and surveillance system along the border.

Bush, who has backed the bill, called on Reid to reinitiate the debate, as he pledged to work to soften the differences among Republican senators on the bill.

"The matter is in life support, but it is not dead," said Senator Arlen Specter, Republican from Pennsylvania and a key sponsor of the bill.

LETTERS

Roisin McAliskey arrested

On May 21, Roisin McAliskey was arrested at her home in Coalisland, County Tyrone, in British-occupied Northern Ireland. The British police were serving a European arrest warrant from Germany, charging McAliskey with an Irish Republican Army mortar attack against a Royal Air Force base in Onasburg, Germany, back in 1996.

In 1997, while pregnant with her first child, McAliskey was arrested on the same charges and held in Belmarsh maximum security prison. She gave birth to her daughter in Holloway women's prison hospital. Faced by an international solidarity campaign and the collapse of the prosecution case, Jack Straw, the British minister of justice, ended what he called an "unjust and oppressive" prosecution. In 2000, the British Public Prosecution Service ruled there was no credible evidence in the case and formally closed it.

After a hearing at Belfast Recorders' Court, McAliskey was freed on £2,500 bail (US$4,920), and a hearing was set for June 6.

Twelve years ago, an international campaign to free her helped stop the British frame-up machine in its tracks. Perhaps this will be needed again.

Roy Inglee
Elsmere, Delaware

Illinois coal miners' strike

I read an article on the *Militant*'s web site about the strike at Freeman United Coal Mines in Illinois in the late 1990s. I was one of the replacement workers who came from West Virginia to work at Crown 2. When we came there we were told we would only maintain the mine so that it was ready to operate when the strike was over. We all know that was a lie. To this day I am sorry for what we did. We were wrong. In the 1930s my father was a union organizer in eastern Kentucky. I know he would not approve of what took place.

Doug Sparks
Findlay, Ohio

'Illegal' immigrants

G.W. Bush, his Republican clan, corporate greed, and their thirst for cheap labor are the real reason for the influx of illegal immigrants in the U.S. Why don't you gang up on G.W. and the corporations to try to make life better in say, Mexico, for starters?

Make these people realize (the illegals) it's up to them to improve their own country, not ride on our shirt tail. They have set back U.S. labor standards by at least 50 years with their cheap labor. An excellent motto should be, "Protest in your own country!"

I will not renew my subscription until the *Militant* has shown some compassion for the struggling American worker. I am a retired union member.

Ed Coleman
Shasta Lake, California

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Capitalists cut wages and take away jobs, not immigrants

BY PAUL PEDERSON

In a letter printed below, Ed Coleman claims undocumented immigrants steal "American" jobs with their "cheap labor" and "set back U.S. labor standards" —a view peddled by many capitalist politicians and trade union officials.

His assertions echo some of the main arguments the ruling class uses to keep the working class divided in order to maintain the capitalist profit system. Such arguments are often repeated by many working people—including African Americans and other U.S.-born workers, as well as immigrants who have become U.S. residents.

REPLY TO A READER

The ruling billionaire families work overtime to pit workers against each other—employed vs. unemployed, skilled vs. unskilled, men vs. women, white vs. Black, native-born vs. foreign-born, the list goes on.

An ongoing influx of immigrant labor *does* increase this competition. It *does* allow the bosses to push down wages for all and to cut jobs, *unless* the labor movement fights to build solidarity, extend unionization, and champion the demands of all sections of the working class, especially the most exploited.

To improve their conditions workers living in Mexico must fight their main enemy—the exploiting classes in Mexico itself. Unlike the United States, however, and like most of the world, Mexico is a semicolonial country. The wealth toilers in Mexico produce is plundered not only by the native capitalists but by financial institutions and monopolies based in the imperialist countries, largely through the slavery of the foreign debt.

Over the past decade imperialist powers, especially Washington, have intensified the brutal extraction of superprofits from the labor and resources of the semicolonial world—Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Unlivable conditions thus created drive millions to opt to cross the border, or sail across the ocean, to be able to feed themselves and their families.

Contrary to Coleman's assertion, it is not the Republicans or George Bush alone who have fostered these policies. They have been defended and advanced in the eight years of the Clinton administration and by Democratic Party politicians today.

This bipartisan offensive has also targeted the unions in the United States, as the bosses drive down wages, speed up production, and extend the working day, work week, work year, and working life. They have relied on repressive measures by the government to heighten insecurity among immigrant workers, hoping to maintain a superexploitable labor pool and keep immigrant workers from joining labor and social struggles.

In spite of this, far from "riding the shirt tail" of the native-born working class, as Coleman says, immigrant workers, including many of the undocumented, have fought and set an example for American labor.

At the Co-Op Mine in Huntington, Utah, 75 coal miners, a majority born in Mexico, began a battle in 2003 for a union. They held firm on the picket line for 10 months, reached out broadly for solidarity, and waged a militant and unified fight. This battle inspired many U.S.-born workers and showed the road forward for the miners' union in the West and beyond.

The front-page article in this issue on the union victory at PM Beef in Minnesota also shows this trend.

As do the large May Day mobilizations the last two years demanding legalization of the undocumented, and ongoing struggles against raids and deportations.

If the labor movement chooses to turn against these workers in the name of "defending the struggling American worker," it is choosing a death march towards becoming a narrow, privileged collection of job trusts. That course undermines solidarity and strengthens the hand of the employers to deepen their assault on the living standards of the entire working class.

Instead the battle for legalization of the undocumented points the road toward a revitalized labor movement. This is the only perspective worthy of those who want to fight against the dog-eat-dog competition, racism, and brutal exploitation that capitalism offers all workers—regardless of where they were born.